

Message Text

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SUBJECT: PRELIMINARY ELECTION PREDICTIONS IN QUEBEC CITY REGION

1. ELECTION CAMPAIGN IS NOW RUNNING AT FULL TILT IN REGION OF QUEBEC CITY. WITH ELECTION PERIOD PAST THE MIDWAY MARK, LIMITED PREDICTION OF RESULTS IS BEGINNING TO BE POSSIBLE IN SOME RIDINGS. OF TWELVE SEATS IN AREA, FOUR SEEM SAFE FOR INCUMBENT LIBERALS. THESE ARE RIDINGS OF JEAN-TALON, CHARLEBOURG, CHARLEVOIX AND CHAUVEAU. THE POPULAR MINISTER OF FINANCE, RAYMOND GARNEAU, IS VIRTUALLY ASSURED OF HIS REELECTION IN JEAN TALON AND MINISTER OF STATE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION, BERNARD LA CHAPELLE, IS ALSO LIKELY HOLD HIS SEAT IN CHAVEAU.

2. IN LOUIS HEBERT, THE FORMER FEDERAL MINISTER, JEAN MARCHAND, IS ENGAGED IN A VERY HARD CONTEST WITH P.Q. STRATEGIST, CLAUDE MORIN. MARCHAND SUFFERS FROM RESENTMENT AGAINST HIS COMING FROM OTTAWA AND IS VIEWED AS TRUDEAU'S MAN IN QUEBEC BY MANY. MORIN IS PERSONALLY WELL KNOWN AND POPULAR IN RIDING HE HAS CULTIVATED SINCE HE WAS DEFEATED IN 1973 BY 777 VOTES. HOWEVER, HE COULD BE HURT BY ABSENCE DURING ELECTION OF MANY LAVAL STUDENTS AND PROFESSORS FROM RIDING AS RESULT OF UNIVERSITY FACULTY STRIKE. IT IS ESTIMATED THAT THIS PHENOMENA COULD COST HIM AS MANY AS 700 VOTES. ELECTION IS LIKELY BE VERY CLOSE AND COULD GO EITHER WAY.

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3. RACE IN MONTMORENCY IS ALSO BEING CLOSELY FOUGHT WITH DEPUTY MAYOR OF MONTMORENCY, MARCEL BEDARD, WHO IS LIBERAL CANDIDATE, ENJOYING A SLIGHT EDGE OVER PEQUISTE, CLEMENT RICHARD.

4. IN LOTHINIERE, THE HOME DISTRICT OF UN CHIEF, RODRIGUE BIRON, THE ADVANTAGE REPORTEDLY IS WITH THE LIBERAL INCUMBENT, GEORGE MASSICOTE. AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, THE STRIKE IN THE BIRON FAMILY FOUNDRY AT STE. CROIX HAS AFFECTED BIRON'S ELECTORAL CHANCES (QUEBEC 292).

5. THE YOUNG LIBERAL DEPUTY, MICHEL PAGE, SEEMS VIRTUALLY ASSURED OF REELECTION IN PORTNEUF. HE WAS BORN AND RAISED IN HIS RIDING WHERE HIS FATHER ALSO HAS BEEN ACTIVE IN LOCAL POLITICS FOR MANY YEARS. HIS MAIN OPPOSITION IS FROM THE CREDITISTE AND UN CANDIDATES. THE P.Q. CANDIDATE IS THOUGHT TO BE TOO WEAK TO PRESENT A THREAT TO PAGE.

6. THE P.Q. IS RUNNING AN ATTRACTIVE YOUNG CANDIDATE IN VANIER RIDING, JEAN-FRANCOIS BERTRAND, WHO IS SON OF LAST UNION NATIONALE PREMIER, JEAN-JACQUE BERTRAND. MOST LOCAL COMMENTATORS GIVE HIM A SIGNIFICANT EDGE ON INCUMBENT LIBERAL, DR. FERNAND DUFOUR.

7. IN LIMOILLOU AND TASCHEREAU THE CAMPAIGNS ARE BEING HARD FOUGHT ON BASIS LOCAL PERSONALITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS. MAIN CONTENDERS IN THESE CONSTITUENCIES ARE LIBERALS, P.Q. AND UN WITH CREDITIALES ACTIVE IN WORKING CLASS QUARTER OF LIMOILLOU.

8. ACROSS THE ST. LAWRENCE IN LEVIS, THE CAMPAIGN HAS GOTTEN OFF TO A SLOW START WITH LITTLE VOTER INTEREST. THE DEPUTY MAYOR AND INCUMBENT LIBERAL, VINCENT CHAGNON, APPEARS TO HAVE A SLIGHT EDGE ON HIS P.Q. OPPONENT WHO IS A LAWYER NAMED GARON FROM STE. ROMUALD. UNLESS THERE IS A LARGE PARTY VOTE OR A REACTION AGAINST THE LIBERAL GOVERNMENT, IT SEEMS UNLIKELY THAT GARON, A RELATIVE UNKNOWN IN MOST OF THE RIDING, WILL MAKE HIMSELF WELL ENOUGH KNOWN TO HIS PROSPECTIVE CONSTITUENTS TO ENABLE HIM TO ATTRACT ENOUGH SUPPORT TO WIN SEAT.

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9. THUS OF 12 SEATS IN AREA, LIBERALS HAVE WHAT APPEARS BE FIVE SAFE SEATS AND TWO OTHERS IN PROBABLE CATEGORY. THE P.Q. HAS GOOD PROSPECTS IN SOME FOUR CONSTITUENCIES IN CLOSELY CONTESTED RACES. THE UN COULD TAKE ONE AND POSSIBLY TWO SEATS IN THE AREA. MOST OF THESE PREDICTIONS ARE VERY TENTATIVE AND COULD CHANGE RADICALLY AS THE CAMPAIGN CONTINUES. INCUMBENTS OFTEN HAVE SOME INITIAL ADVANTAGE OVER LESSER KNOWN OPPONENTS IN SUCH A SHORT CAMPAIGN PERIOD. THE LIBERALS ARE

SUFFERING FROM WIDESPREAD DISENCHANTMENT WITH THEIR PERFORMANCE IN GOVERNMENT. A LARGE PROTEST VOTE COULD AFFECT ELECTIONS IN SEVERAL RIDINGS. JUDGING FROM COMMENTS WE HAVE HEARD FROM MANY SOURCES, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THERE IS STILL A LARGE UNDECIDED VOTE WHICH WILL BE FOCUS OF MUCH ATTENTION BY CANDIDATES AS IT MAY HOLD BALANCE OF SUCCESS IN ALL BUT SAFEST SEATS.

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